

Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Las Vegas, Nevada

September 30, 2012

The President. Hello, Las Vegas! Oh, what a beautiful evening! A spectacular evening! This is why I like coming to Vegas: good weather and good people.

Now, first of all, before I get started, can everybody please give Chasstiry a big round of applause for the great introduction. I want to thank Desert Pines High School—go Jaguars—for hosting us. Give it up for Mana; I hear they played an outstanding set earlier. It's good to be back with your once and next Congresswoman; Dina Titus is here. And it's good to see my national campaign cochair who also happens to be one of the counselors here at Desert Pines; Loretta Harper is in the house.

And it's good to see all of you. I hope you're having a good time.

Audience members. We love you!

The President. I love you back.

Now, you may have heard that in a few days my opponent in this election and I are going to have a debate. I'm looking forward to it. I know folks in the media are speculating already on who's going to have the best zingers.

Audience member. You are!

The President. I don't know about that. Who's going to put the most points on the board.

Audience members. You are!

The President. No, no, Governor Romney, he's a good debater. I'm just okay. But what I'm most concerned about is having a serious discussion about what we need to do to keep the country growing and restore security for hard-working Americans. That's what people are going to be listening for. That's the debate that you deserve. Because in the coming weeks, you're going to have a big choice to make, Nevada. And it's not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. It's a choice between two different paths for this country. It's a choice between two fundamentally different visions for our Nation.

See, I believe that as a nation, we're moving forward again. We're not where we need to be yet. We've got a lot more work to do here in Nevada and all across the country to make the middle class secure again, to give ladders of opportunity for folks who are fighting to get into the middle class. But the question is, whose plan is better for you? Now, my——

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. My opponent is a big believer in top-down economics. He thinks that if we just spend another \$5 trillion on tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, if we get rid of regulations on Wall Street, then all our problems will be solved. And jobs and prosperity will trickle down on all of you, and the deficit will disappear, and we'll live happily ever after.

There's only problem—one problem with that. We just tried that in the decade before I became President. It didn't work. Top-down economics never works. We don't need to double down on the same trickle-down policies that got us into this mess in the first place. We don't need policies that just help folks at the very top. That's not how the country grows. That's not

how we succeed. We succeed when the middle class is getting bigger, when more people have the chance to get ahead and live up to their God-given potential.

We don't get very far when we've got leaders who write off half the Nation as a bunch of victims who don't take responsibility for their lives. Let me tell you, I've been to Nevada a lot. You guys may get tired of me.

Audience members. No!

The President. But as I travel around the State, I don't see a lot of victims. I see a lot of hard-working Nevadans. I see students trying to work their way through school. I see single moms trying to put in overtime to raise their kids. I see senior citizens who've saved all their lives because they've worked all their lives to earn their retirement. I see veterans who've served this country bravely. I see soldiers who defend our freedom today.

We don't believe that anybody is entitled to success. We don't believe government should help people who aren't trying to help themselves. But we do believe in something called opportunity. We believe that hard work should pay off in this country, that responsibility should be rewarded in this country, that this is a country where everybody should get a fair shot and everybody should do their fair share and everybody is playing by the same rules. We believe in an America where no matter what you look like or where you come from, what your last name is, who you love, that you can make it if you try.

That's the country I believe in. That's what I've been fighting for. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Now, see, what I want to promote is a new economic patriotism, one that's rooted in the belief that we grow the economy best when everybody has got a shot and the middle class is thriving. And I won't pretend that it's going to be easy to get there. It took us a bunch of years to get us into this mess; it's going to take a few more to get us out. But I want everybody to know that our challenges can be solved, our problems can be met. We've still got the best workers in the world and the best entrepreneurs and the best scientists, the best businesses, the best colleges, the best universities. There isn't a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places with the United States.

And you know what, the path I'm offering may be harder, but it leads to a better place. So I've put forward a specific, practical plan to create jobs and grow the middle class and rebuild our economy on a stronger foundation. So I want you to know what this plan is so when you talk to folks you can say, well, here's what he's going to do.

First, I want to export more products, but I want to outsource fewer jobs. You remember when the auto industry was about to go under, my opponent said, let's "let Detroit go bankrupt."

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

I said, let's come together and reinvent a dying auto industry, and now it's back on top of the world. We've created more than half a million new manufacturing jobs.

So now you've got a choice. We can keep giving tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas, or we can reward companies that are opening new plants and hiring new workers

right here in Nevada. That's what I want to do. I want to help big factories and small businesses export more. We can create a million new manufacturing jobs, but you're going to have to vote to make it happen.

I want us to control more of our own energy; that's the second part of our plan. After 30 years of doing nothing, we raised fuel standards so by the middle of the next decade, your cars and trucks will go twice as far on a gallon of gas. That will save you money, and it will be good for our economy, and it's good for our national security, and it's good for our environment.

We've doubled the amount of renewable energy we generate from sources like wind and solar right here in Nevada and all across the country. Thousands of Americans have jobs building wind turbines and solar panels and long-lasting batteries. Today, the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in the last two decades.

So now you've got a choice: We could reverse this progress, like Governor Romney wants to do.

Audience members. No!

The President. Or we can build on it. See, unlike my opponent, I'm not going to let the oil companies write our energy plan. I'm not going to let oil companies collect \$4 billion in corporate welfare from our taxpayers.

We've got a better plan, where we invest in wind and solar and farmers and scientists who are harnessing new biofuels to power our cars and where construction workers are building homes and factories that waste less energy and we're investing to get out a hundred-year supply of natural gas. We can create hundreds of thousands of jobs here in Nevada and all across the country and cut our oil imports in half by 2020. That's my plan. But you've got to vote if we're going to make it happen.

I want to give more Americans the chance to get a great education and get the skills they need to compete; that's the third part of my plan. Education is the only reason I'm standing here today: son of a single mom. It's the only reason Michelle got a chance. And so now the question is, are we going to give that opportunity to everybody? Right now there are millions of students who are paying less for college because we took away billions of dollars that were going to banks and we said let's give them directly to students.

So now you've got a choice: We can gut our investments in education, like Governor Romney wants to do, to pay for more tax breaks for the wealthy.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

Or we can decide, here in Nevada and here in the United States of America, no child should have her dream deferred because of an overcrowded classroom. No family should set aside a college acceptance letter because they don't have the money. No company should have to look in some other country because they can't find the workers they need with the right skills here at home.

So, Nevada, I need you to help me recruit 100,000 new math and science teachers, improve our early education system, create 2 million more slots in the community colleges so

workers can get trained for the new jobs that are out there right now. Help us work with colleges and universities to keep tuition down. That's a goal we can meet together. You can choose that future for America. But if we're going to do that, what do you need to do?

Audience members. Vote!

The President. You're going to need to vote.

Number four, I want to reduce our deficit without sticking it to the middle class and working class families. My plan would do just that. And I've already worked with Republicans and Democrats to cut spending by a trillion dollars. I'm willing to do a little bit more. I want to reform our tax code so it's simple and it's fair, but I also want to ask the wealthiest households in America to pay slightly higher taxes over incomes of \$250,000. That's the same rate we had when Bill Clinton was President. We created 23 million new jobs, the biggest surplus in history, and a whole lot of millionaires to boot.

So that's my plan. And in fairness, my opponent has got a plan too. That's only one problem: Some of you heard Bill Clinton say there's no arithmetic in it. [*Laughter*] They think that somehow you can lower our deficits by spending another \$5 trillion on new breaks for the wealthy. But no matter how many times they try to "reboot" their campaign and try to explain it, they can't. They can't explain how you spend \$5 trillion on tax cuts for the wealthy without raising taxes on middle class families. How do you spend \$2 trillion on new military spending that our military hasn't asked for and cut our deficit? You can't do it. The math doesn't add up.

Governor Romney said he thought it was fair for somebody making \$20 million a year, like him, to pay a lower tax rate than a cop or a teacher or somebody working over at one of the casinos who's making \$50,000. Now, I don't think that's fair.

Audience members. No!

The President. I don't think that's how we grow our economy.

Audience members. No!

The President. I refuse to ask middle class families to give up the deductions they have for owning a home or raising their kids just so me or Governor Romney get a tax break. I don't want to ask students to pay more for college or kick kids out of Head Start or eliminate health insurance for millions of poor or elderly or disabled Americans just so millionaires and billionaires can get a tax cut. We can't afford it.

I don't think the answer for all the hard-working folks here in Nevada and across the country whose homes are underwater is just to do nothing and wait it out. That was Governor Romney's advice: just let the whole housing market bottom out. Well, you know what? My administration, we have already helped more than a million responsible homeowners refinance their mortgages. I'm running to let them get—I'm running to make sure that everybody, more people like them who are responsible, who have been paying and making their mortgage payments, that they have a chance to refinance and save up to \$3,000 a year.

And by the way, I'm never going to turn Medicare into a voucher program. We're not going to do that either. If you've been working all your life and now you're about to retire, you shouldn't have to spend your golden years at the mercy of an insurance company. We're going to reform and strengthen Medicare for the long haul the right way by reducing the cost of health care, not by shifting it onto seniors. And we're not going to—we are going to keep the promise of Social Security. We're not going to turn it over to Wall Street.

And just like we're doing work here at home, we're going to continue to do work abroad. Four years ago, I said I'd end the war in Iraq; I did. I said we're going to wind down the war in Afghanistan; we are. And while a twin tower—new tower rises above the New York skyline, Al Qaida is on the path to defeat, and Osama bin Laden is dead.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Now, as we saw a couple of weeks ago, we still face serious threats around the world. And that's why, so long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will make sure we always have the strongest military the world has ever known.

But you know the thing that makes our military strongest is the amazing men and women in uniform. So when they take off that uniform, when they come home, we've got to serve them as well as they've served us, because nobody who fought for us should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads or the care they deserve, when they come home. Nobody.

Governor Romney has got a different set of ideas. He thinks the way I ended the war in Iraq is "tragic." He won't tell us how he'll end the war in Afghanistan. We don't know. I have, and I will. And I'm going to use the money we're no longer spending on war to do some nation-building here at home: rebuilding our roads and our bridges and putting Americans back to work. That's part of what makes America strong. That's what we're going to do.

So this is the choice we face in this election. This is what the election comes down to. And you are going to hear over the next 2 months—I know you must be tired of hearing ads—but you're going to hear more over the next 2—or the next 6 weeks. And over and over again, you're going to hear my opponents talk about how bigger tax cuts and fewer regulations, that's the way to go, and since government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing. Their basic theory is, if you can't afford health care, then hope you don't get sick. If you can't afford college, borrow money from your parents.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. You know what? That's not who we are. I don't think government can solve all our problems, but government is not the source of all our problems either. There are some things we've got to do together. Instead of going around blaming somebody—unions or immigrants or gays or somebody—for what's going on, what we need to do is pull together. We're all in this together. We believe that America only works when we all accept responsibility for ourselves and for each other. That's how we create more opportunity, more possibility. America is not about what can be done for you; it's about what can be done by us together, as one Nation and one people.

And that's what you understood back in 2008. You're the reason seniors across Nevada are averaging nearly \$600 less on their medicines because of health care reform. You did that. You're the reason that students—thousands of students at UNLV and schools across this State—have more help paying for college. You made that happen. You're the reason why two grandparents in Reno could refinance their mortgage and keep their piece of the American Dream.

You're the reason why a young immigrant who grew up here and went to school here and pledged allegiance to our flag will no longer be deported from the only country she's ever called home. You're the reason why an outstanding soldier won't be kicked out of the military just because of who he loved. You're the reason why thousands of families have been able to

say to the loved ones who served us so bravely, "Welcome home." [*Applause*] Welcome home. Welcome home. You made that happen.

I made this point down in Florida the other day, and Governor Romney heard me say you can't make change just from Washington. And somehow, he got all excited about this. He changed his speech; he said, I'm going to make change from the inside. And it got me thinking, well, what kind of inside job is he talking about? [*Laughter*]

Is he talking about the inside job where outsourcers are writing the Tax Code? Is he talking about the inside job where oil companies are writing the energy plan and health insurance companies are writing the insurance plans? Is he talking about the inside job where a bunch of men in Washington decide women can't make their own health care decisions? Because if that's the inside job he's talking about, we don't want it. We don't need it.

Change is only going to happen when ordinary Americans, working together with their elected representatives, make all our voices heard. That's how change happens.

So the question then is, how hard are you willing to work for it?

Audience members. Hard!

The President. How hard are you willing to work for it?

Audience members. Hard!

The President. We've got just a few more weeks left. And in 2008, when I won, 47 percent of the people didn't vote for me; they voted for John McCain. And that's the way democracy works. And I said on election night, I said to the people who didn't vote for me, especially, I said, I may not have won your vote, but I heard your voice. I need your help, and I'm going to fight for you too. I'm going to work on your behalf too.

Because I'm not interested in creating Democratic jobs or Republican jobs, I'm interested in creating American jobs. I don't want to improve schools in the blue States or red States, I want to improve schools in the United States of America. I'm not just fighting for values that are worker values or business values or rich people's values or poor people's values or Black or White or Hispanic or Asian or Native America or abled or not—disabled—I'm fighting for American values.

And those values of hard work and individual responsibility, but also looking out for one another, those are values that we all share. Those are values that belong to all of us. And now we've got to reclaim them.

If you are willing to work hard, harder than you did 4 years ago, if you're willing to knock on some doors and make some phone calls, we can reclaim those values. We can rally around a new economic patriotism. We can rebuild this economy. We can strengthen the middle class. We can keep moving forward.

We're not going backwards. We're not as divided as our politics suggest. I still believe we've got more in common than anybody understands. I believe in you, and I ask you to keep on believing in me. I'm asking for your vote. I'm asking you to stand with me. And if you stand with me and work with me, we will win Clark County again. We'll win Nevada again. We'll win this election again. We'll finish what we started. And we'll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:44 p.m. at Desert Pines High School. In his remarks, he referred to Chasstiry Vazquez, student, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign rallies :: Las Vegas, NV.

Locations: Las Vegas, NV.

Names: Clinton, William J.; Harper, Loretta; McCain, John S., III; Obama, Michelle; Romney, W. Mitt; Titus, A. Constandina; Vazquez, Chasstiry.

Subjects: Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S. : "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, repeal; Armed Forces, U.S. : Funding; Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Budget, Federal : Government programs, spending reductions; Business and industry : Automobile industry :: Strengthening efforts; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Commerce, international : U.S. exports :: Expansion; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : Global competitiveness; Education : Postsecondary education :: Affordability; Education : Postsecondary education :: Student loans, elimination of subsidies to private providers; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: U.S. production; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: Promotion efforts; Energy : Energy efficiency and weatherization :: Homes and buildings; Energy : Foreign sources; Energy : Fuel efficiency standards, strengthening efforts; Energy : Oil and gas industry :: Subsidies, elimination; Health and medical care : Health insurance reforms; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Housing : Mortgage refinancing programs; Immigration and naturalization : Reform; Iraq : U.S. and coalition forces, withdrawal; Nevada : Democratic Party events; Nevada : President's visits; Social Security and retirement : Social Security program; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Taxation : Tax cuts, budgetary effects; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group; Veterans : Benefits.

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